

Range Extension, New Records and Natural History Notes on *Lepturophis albofuscus* (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854) (Squamata: Colubridae) in Thailand

Michael Cota ^{*1}, Robert W. Mendyk ², Tanya Chan-ard ¹,
Sunchai Makchai ¹ and Pratheep Meewattana ³

¹ Natural History Museum, National Science Museum, Thailand,
Technopolis, Khlong 5, Khlong Luang, Pathum Thani 12120 Thailand

² Center for Science Teaching and Learning, 1 Tanglewood Road,
Rockville Centre, New York 11501 USA

³ Department of Biology, Faculty of Science and Technology,
Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok 10300 Thailand

ABSTRACT: During field surveys in 2010 and 2011, *Lepturophis albofuscus* was found in four localities, in Narathiwat, Satun, Songkhla and Surat Thani provinces, the species had been previously recorded in Thailand only from Nakhon Si Thammarat and Yala provinces. Localities in Thailand, geographic distribution, natural history and implications of these new localities are discussed.

KEY WORDS: *Lepturophis albofuscus*, range extension, geographic distribution, new record, natural history.

INTRODUCTION

Lepturophis albofuscus was first recorded from Thailand by Vogel and Kreuz (1990), as *Lepturophis borneensis* Boulenger, 1900, a junior synonym of *Lepturophis albofuscus* (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854). Up to the present time, *L. albofuscus* was only known from the locality cited by these authors, i.e. Thung Song, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. Manthey and Grossmann (1997) listed two provinces, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Yala. Since that time, this species had not been recorded again in Thailand. This species was

illustrated in the book by Nutphand (2001) on the snakes of Thailand, but without locality and was misidentified as *Lycodon faciatus* (David *et al.* 2004). Chanhom *et al.* (2001) presented Thai voucher material but without precise locality. The presence was overlooked in a recent guide on Southeast Asian reptiles (Das, 2010). However, between 2010 and 2011, three new localities were discovered during field studies by two organisations and one recreational field trip.

Since there are so few records of *Lepturophis albofuscus* in Thailand this species is poorly

*Corresponding author.

E-mail: Herpetologe@gmail.com

documented, very little is known about its natural history in this country.

Historical Knowledge on the Geographic Distribution in Thailand

The only exact locality for *Lepturophis albofuscus* recorded in past literature or from known specimens was Thung Song, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province (Vogel & Kreuz, 1990), also cited in Chan-ard *et al.* (1999), and also by Pauwels *et al.* (2006), who provided reference to voucher material. There are only a few references to geographic distribution in this region in other literature. Cox (1991), in the species account of *Lepturophis albofuscus* stated that its distribution in Thailand goes as far north as the province of Songkhla.

Manthey and Grossmann (1997) gave only provinces as localities in Thailand, where were Nakhon Si Thammarat and Yala, repeating the records by Vogel and Kreuz (1990).

Nabhitabhata *et al.* (2004) recorded Thung Song, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Sakaerat, Nakhon Ratchasima as localities of *Lepturophis albofuscus*. However, the Nakhon Ratchasima locality does not appear in Nabhitabhata and Chan-ard (2005).

Das (2010) did not list Thailand in the species account of *Lepturophis albofuscus*.

New Records and Extension of Known Geographical Distribution in Thailand

In April 2010, during research being conducted by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, *Lepturophis albofuscus* (fig. 1) was discovered at 06° 50' 10.6"N 100° 10' 20.0"E at 264m asl, in Panan Forest, Khuan Kalong District, Satun Province, Thailand. This locality represents a new provincial record for the species.

In August 2010, during biodiversity research conducted by the Natural History Museum, National Science Museum, Thailand, a specimen of *Lepturophis albofuscus*, THNHM 20705, was collected in Saba Yoi District, Songkhla Province, Thailand. This record provides an exact locality to augment the Cox (1991) provincial report.

In June of 2011, during a recreational field trip, *Lepturophis albofuscus* (fig. 2) was discovered and photographically recorded at 08° 55' 06.07"N 98° 31' 44.60"E at 101m asl, in Khao Sok National Park, Khlong Sok Sub-district, Phanom District, Surat Thani Province, Thailand. This record is not only a new provincial record, but represents the northernmost known locality for the species.

Lastly, in July of 2011, during field research being conducted by the Natural History Museum, National Science Museum, Thailand, a specimen of *Lepturophis albofuscus*,

THNHM 20742, was discovered at Ban Bala, Waeng District, Narathiwat Province, Thailand. This represents a new provincial record.

Natural History Notes

All specimens of *Lepturophis albofuscus* encountered were seen at night. The specimen found in the Panan Forest, Satun Province, was foraging on the sandy side of a large stream. The only obvious prey items encountered in the area around the

stream were various species of anurans, such as *Microhyla heymonsi*, *Polypedates leucomystax*, *Limnonectes blythii*, and *Odorrana livida*. The specimen found in Khao Sok National Park, Surat Thani Province, was along a trail that paralleled the main waterway between the waterfall and park headquarters. These observations appear to confirm what is stated in existing literature (Cox, 1991; Manthey and Grossmann, 1997; Cox *et al.*, 1998 and Das (2010).



Figure 1. *Lepturophis albofuscus* found in Panan Forest, Satun Province.



Figure 2. *Lepturophis albofuscus* from Surat Thani Province.

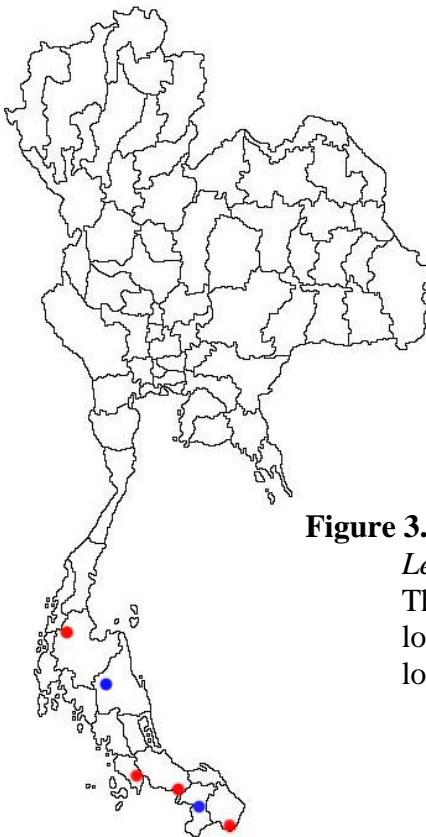


Figure 3. Documented localities of *Lepturophis albofuscus* in Thailand. Previously documented locality in blue. Documented localities made in this study in red.

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